



## Esther Lieu

**Year of Call:** 2011

**Email Address:** [esther.lieu@3pb.co.uk](mailto:esther.lieu@3pb.co.uk)

**Secure Email:** [esther.lieu@3paper.cjsm.net](mailto:esther.lieu@3paper.cjsm.net)

**Telephone:** 0117 928 1520

## Overview

Esther Lieu is a specialist family lawyer with an emphasis on private law children and financial remedy matters and cases involving financial provision following divorce or dissolution of marriages and separation of unmarried couples.

Her private law children practice extends from domestic applications to jurisdictional disputes and international enforcement, as well as cases involving fact finding hearings, parental alienation and transfer of residence.

Esther's financial remedies practice encompasses all matters arising between married couples (from first appointment to contested final hearings) and unmarried couples (including property disputes and applications for child support). She has appeared in the High Court seeking injunctive relief and permission to proceed following an overseas divorce and regularly advises on settlement to assist clients in managing their costs.

Esther has completed the ICCA/FLBA's Vulnerable Witness Training and comfortably deals with all types of vulnerability, howsoever arising within family proceedings. She takes a fearless approach to ensure that all court hearings are FPR 2010 Part 3A and PD3AA compliant.

She has been described as 'outstanding', 'supportive' and 'knowledgeable' and enjoys regular repeat instructions. Esther is a strong and tenacious advocate who always ensures that her client is comfortable and confident with her representation. She is rigorous in her case preparation and prompt in responding to her professional clients.

Esther spends most of her spare time chasing after her two young sons, normally outdoors and often in the mud.

Esther Lieu is qualified to accept instructions directly from members of the public and professional clients under the Direct Public Access scheme.

## Recommendations

'Esther is able to build an excellent report with clients in extremely difficult circumstances, making them feel well-supported throughout the process. She is compassionate and approachable, as well as clear in her advice, and has excellent client care skills.'

**Legal 500 2025/Divorce and Financial Remedy/Leading Juniors/Western Circuit**

"None of this would have been possible without your help and support - I am thrilled with the result and will always be incredibly grateful to you."

### Client

"Thank you for everything - for all the practical guidance, sound advice and the perfectionism with which you always drafted the pleadings and documents, all of which brought L to this point."

**Client**

"I have felt very well supported by you throughout your involvement in this case and could not have been more confident in your representation of me in the court room"

**Client**

"I just wanted to email to pass on my thanks as Esther has been fantastic and greatly helped with settling the financial case for the client as well a previously settling the children act case for another client as well."

**Solicitor**

"Esther Lieu was outstanding, she was supportive and explained my options very clearly. She was very understanding and knowledgeable."

**Client**

## **Academic qualifications**

- College of Law, BPTC (Merit) 2012
- Inner Temple Exhibition Scholar 2011
- College of Law, GDL (Commendation) 2011
- University of London, MA - Human Rights (Merit) 2006
- University of Bristol, BSc - Philosophy and Psychology (2:1) 2005

## **Professional qualifications & appointments**

- ICCA/FLBA's Vulnerable Witness Training

## **Professional bodies**

- Family Law Bar Association (Treasurer, Western Circuit)
- Human Rights Lawyers Association
- Immigration Law Practitioners' Association (previously a Trustee)

# Expertise

## Family

Esther Lieu is a specialist family lawyer with an emphasis on private family law matters and cases involving financial provision following divorce or dissolution of marriages and separation of unmarried couples.

## Finance

Esther has a busy practice in financial remedies (from pre-nuptial and separation agreements through to contested final hearings), including applications brought under ToLATA and Schedule 1. She is a forceful negotiator at an FDR and balances the costs of further of litigation against the overarching aim of achieving the best outcome for her client. In particular she has experience of the following:

- Applications brought under ToLATA including equitable accounting claims
- Maintenance applications (brought under MCA 1973, Schedule 1 CA 1989 and CSA 1991)
- Interveners and third party interests
- Inherited wealth
- Non-matrimonial property
- Variation and enforcement applications
- Applications for financial relief following overseas divorce (MFPA 1984)
- Applications for injunctive relief

### Recent cases

#### **H v H (2019)**

Acted for the husband in a case that involved the wife's receipt of a significant inheritance at the time of separation, and the death of the husband's mother during proceedings resulting in his own inheritance (that was tied up with other family members).

#### **B v A (2019)**

Represented the father in an application brought under Schedule 1 CA1989 by the mother for child maintenance to extend beyond the child's 18th birthday on account of special circumstances.. Both applications were successfully opposed following detailed analysis of the Child Support Act 1991.

#### **M v M (2017), J v C (2017), K v M (2017)**

Advice provided in several cases concerning division of property owned by un-married couples, to include instances where there was no declaration of trust, an application to set aside a declaration of trust, calculation of beneficial interests and claims for equitable accounting.

#### **P v P (2017)**

Acted for the Russian wife in protracted proceedings which included successfully obtaining permission to apply for financial relief following an overseas divorce in the Royal Courts of Justice, obtaining injunctive relief against the husband's attempt to dissipate assets, countering the husband's father's claim to a third party interest in the property and achieving a very positive outcome at final hearing.

## Private law

Esther is regularly instructed in applications for child arrangements orders, specific issue and prohibited steps orders, as well as injunctions, enforcement applications, fact-finding hearings and contested final hearings. In particular, she has experience in cases involving:

- Parental alienation/ intractable hostility
- Transfer of residence
- Disputed jurisdiction (within the U.K. and international)
- Internal and international relocation
- Allegations of domestic violence and finding of fact hearings

### Recent Cases

#### **W v W (2019)**

Represented the father during a 3 day fact-find within a long-running application for child arrangements orders, and successfully defended him in committal proceedings brought by the mother.

#### **B v B (2019)**

Acted for the father in successfully opposing the mother's application to relocate with the parties' children who lived with her.

#### **S v S (2019)**

Acted for the father following the unlawful removal of his children by the mother to Scotland. Successfully obtained an interim order that the children be returned to England and successfully argued (against the mother) that England retained jurisdiction to hear the matter. The children were returned to the father's care and he was ultimately granted a live with order in respect of both.

#### **E v E (2018)**

Represented the Children's Guardian in an application by the father for a transfer of residence. A fact-find established that the mother had alienated the father from the children; subsequently the Guardian recommended a transfer of residence which was ultimately ordered by the court following a contested final hearing.

#### **V v G (2017)**

Acted for the father seeking contact and then residence orders in respect of his daughter in a long running protracted matter in the High Court which included the appointment of r.16.4 Guardian, committal proceedings against the mother (she was found guilty of contempt), a finding of fact (which established that the mother had alienated the father) and the making of Interim Supervision Orders in respect of the child.

## FDR Hearing Service

Esther is available for private remote FDR hearings. For more information on private remote FDR hearings please [click here](#).

## Articles

Esther Lieu analyses *I County Council v TD & Others* [2017] EWHC 379 (Fam) for Family Law Week and considers of the difference between care orders and supervision orders.

[View Article](#)

Esther Lieu analyses *W v X* (Jurisdiction in matters of parental responsibility) [2017] EUECJ C-499-15 for Family Law Week

[View Article](#)

Fact finding into serious injuries: Esther Lieu summarises *A v W and Others No 1 (Fact Finding)* [2016] EWFC 64 for Family Law Week.

[View Article](#)

Esther Lieu analyses *M v F* [2016] EWHC 3194 (Fam) (Jan 2017) for Family Law Week.

[View Article](#)

Esther Lieu summarises *Re AB (Surrogacy: Consent)* [2016] EWHC 2643 (Fam) (Nov 16).

[View Article](#)

ECtHR Judgment finding that the delays in the mother's enforcement proceedings against her former husband for unpaid child support constituted a breach of her Article 6 rights: *Veiga da Silva Braga v Portugal* (Application No. 39507/13) (Aug 16).

[View Article](#)

An analysis by Esther Lieu for Family Law Week.

[View Article](#)

An analysis by Sarah Jennings & Esther Lieu, 3PB, with District Judge Julie Exton look at the Family Drug and Alcohol Court for Family Law Week.

[View Article](#)

Esther Lieu explores the circumstances in which parental responsibility may be terminated and considers the effect of s.4(2A) in anticipation of the Court of Appeal's judgment in the appeal from *CW v SG*.

[View Article](#)

Esther Lieu and Adam Weiss, Legal Director, The AIRE Centre, explain the ECtHR's recent decision in *Raw v France* which considered, amongst other matters, the enforcement of court orders and the circumstances in which a parent could represent their children in Strasbourg proceedings.

[View Article](#)